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ABSTRACT

The curriculum guide presents activity suggestions for teachers to use with autistic students in grades K-12. Brief remarks are offered on placement criteria, student characteristics, and parent participation. Goals, objectives, procedures, materials, domain areas, and evaluation approaches are listed for eight skill areas: (1) pre-vocational (measuring weight, height, liquid, and telling time); (2) vocational (housekeeping, sheltered workshop); (3) recreation (individual and group sports, Special Olympics); (4) academic (money and time concepts, survival sight vocabulary, reading comprehension); (5) language/communication (functional language and communication skills); (6) behavioral; (7) sexual/social (body parts, menstruation); and (8) activities of daily living (meal preparation, food purchase, clothing skills, independent bathroom skills, basic personal first aid skills). (CL)

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PROGRAM for AUTISTIC CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

A Curriculum Guide for Autistic Students

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INTRODUCTION

The information throughout this booklet is a well planned sequence of curricula activities for autistic students who are in grades K-12 or ages 6-21. It is a curriculum guide rather than a completed curriculum. It is presented as a guide for two major reasons:

1. If it were a complete curriculum, it would be so extensive with activities and skills to be learned that the number of pages would be overwhelming, and
2. Each teacher for the program is trained specifically in the area of autism and needs only to follow the curriculum guide utilizing his/her expertise to provide a very intensive, individualized and appropriate educational program for each student. Therefore each teacher will use his/her expertise and experience with the activities to provide appropriate learning activities.

Within the guide, specific headings or "units" were chosen because it was felt that all of the skills to be learned could be included in each unit. Students within the program have unique and individual needs. For this reason, this curriculum for autistic students presents a continuum for learning. Ongoing evaluation and revision of this curriculum guide is necessary if it is to be used as an effective tool in working with autistic students.

CRITERIA FOR PLACEMENT

Before a student is placed in the Portsmouth Autistic Program,

the placement team will review all pertinent data and agree that the student exhibits those behavioral characteristics that have been associated with the autistic syndrome. These characteristics include: absence of a minimal communication, lack of eye contact, severe developmental lag and behavioral difficulties, and a deficit in academic, pre-vocational and appropriate socialization.

Parents are expected to participate fully in their child's program. The Portsmouth Program has a home/school coordination component which is designed to insure consistency of program between school and home and provide resources and support to parents.

Related services such as speech and occupational therapy are available as students need them.

The placement team decides the student's level of functioning and what it may be increased to. This determines where the student will begin in the curriculum.

RESOURCES

1. New Hampshire Society for Autism: Lending Library
2. National Society for Autistic Children and Adolescents

DEFINITION

Autism is a neurological disorder characterized by severe problems in communication and behavior. It is a behaviorally defined syndrome that involves disturbances in developmental

rates, responses to sensory stimuli, speech, language, cognitive abilities, and abilities to relate to people.

The following is a partial list of characteristics associated with people having autism. Not all autistic people will have all of these behaviors, and they would vary in degree.

1. Difficulty in mixing with other people.
2. Act as deaf.
3. Resist learning.
4. No fear of real dangers.
5. Resist change in routine.
6. Indicate needs by gesture.
7. Inappropriate laughing or crying.
8. Marked physical overactivity.
9. Poor eye contact.
10. Inappropriate attachment to objects.
11. Spin objects.
12. Self-stimulatory behaviors, including rocking, arm flapping, flitting fingers in front of face.

PRE-VOCATIONAL - MEASURING (WEIGHT, HEIGHT, LIQUID)

Goal: Upon completion of this unit, students will have an understanding of measurement (weight, height, liquid).

Objective: Student will learn how to measure (weight, height, liquid) as related to everyday functions such as cooking and personal measurement.

Procedure: Teacher will provide numerous examples of measurement to students where they will be responsible for measuring ingredients for cooking purposes, measuring height and length with a ruler. These activities will be in a structured sequence so students are involved in "hands on" activities that are related to ADL skills (e.g., measuring milk for a recipe or meat for correct cooking time).

Materials: Ruler, tape measure, measuring cups and spoons, small scale, large scale

Domain Area: Home and school

Evaluation: Teacher observation of students' competency to successfully complete measurement activities.

PRE-VOCATIONAL - TELLING TIME

Goal: Upon completion of this unit, students will be able to tell time.

Objective: Students will learn to tell time by the hour, half-hour, minutes and seconds.

Procedure: Teacher will present learning activities for students that begin with recognizing the numbers 1-12, understanding the concept of one-half hour, quarter hour, and know that 60 minutes equals one hour, 24 hours equal one day, etc.

Materials: Time worksheets, clock, watches

Domain Area: Classroom

Evaluation: Teacher observation. Student mastery of learning activities.

VOCATIONAL - FOOD SERVICE

Goal: Students will develop necessary vocational/occupational job skills in the area of food service.

Objective: Students will be exposed to various activities within the food service area (e.g., cooking, dishes, cleaning, preparation, etc.).

Procedures: Teacher will present activities in the proper sequence, and students will successfully complete all assigned activities and become proficient in each area. Utilizing the STEProgram objectives listed on Page 10 of the food service curriculum and unit list on page 11, describe the sequence to be followed.

Materials: Picture cookbook, culinary arts equipment

Domain Area: Classroom and STEProgram

Evaluation: Teacher observation, completion of project

VOCATIONAL - LAUNDRY WORKER

Goal: Student will develop employability skills necessary for a position as a laundry worker.

Objective: Student will acquire skills that are important for care of laundry (e.g., washing, drying, detergents, ironing, machine usage, folding and mending).

Procedure: Teacher will present a sequence of activities that will lead students through the general care of laundry.

Materials: Washer, dryer, detergent, measuring cups and iron

Domain Area: Classroom, STEProgram kitchen area

Evaluation: Teacher observation of student working on tasks and assessment of quality of students' work.

VOCATIONAL - HOUSEKEEPING

Goal: Students will develop appropriate vocational skills necessary for employment as a housekeeper.

Objective: Students will develop necessary housekeeping/maintenance skills required for employment as a maintenance person, and those that enable an individual to complete light housekeeping duties in his/her own home.

Procedure: Teacher will present a sequence of activities (e.g., bedmaking, sweeping, cleaning kitchen, dusting, washing windows, vacuuming, etc.) in which students will become proficient at each task.

Materials: General cleaning supplies and housekeeping equipment

Domain Area: Various classrooms, student's own home

Evaluation: Teacher observation

VOCATIONAL - ASSEMBLY LINE WORKER

Goal: Student will successfully acquire skills necessary for employment as an assembly line worker in a small industrial environment.

Objective: Student will successfully perform the sequential skills necessary for assembly line work.

Procedure: Teacher will present activities that are necessary for employment as an assembly line worker. Visitations to area businesses will be made to establish a suitable work program. Teacher acts as a job developer on the job.

Materials: Assembly type materials similar to those required for sheltered workshop

Domain Area: Classroom and - supervised - at a business assembly line

Evaluation: Staff observation. Observed competence in assembly position (on-the-job training)

VOCATIONAL - GROCERY STORE BAGGER

Goal: Students will develop skills necessary to secure a position as a grocery store bagger.

Objective: Student will acquire the vocational skills that are necessary for employment as a bagger at a store such as Shaw's or DeMoula's.

Procedure: Teacher will provide a sequence of tasks that teach students the correct ways to bag a variety of items at the grocery checkout counter. Students will also be proficient at the other skills needed for successful employment (e.g., cooperation, attention span, social awareness and other appropriate work habits). In the classroom, a simulated work station will be established with graduated amounts of on-the-job training to be set up at the actual work site.

Materials: Materials needed to practice bagging store items

Domain Area: Classroom and actual work site

Evaluation: Staff and store supervisor observation

VOCATIONAL - SHELTERED WORKSHOP

Goal: Student will develop skills necessary for involvement in a supervised workshop environment that emphasizes job training and employability skills.

Objective: Students will develop good work habits, attention span and independent skills that insure success in a sheltered workshop.

Procedure: After it has been determined by the SEPT that an individual is appropriate for a sheltered workshop environment, he/she will be placed in a supervised work setting performing the required tasks in a successful manner.

Materials: Assembly type materials used in evaluation and training

Domain Area: Special needs classroom

Evaluation: Staff observation of student: formal, academic, social, vocational assessment

VOCATIONAL - WORK EXPERIENCES

Goal: Student will acquire pre-vocational/vocational skills necessary for obtaining a job placement through the work experience program.

Objective: Through the hands-on experiences in school situations, skills for employment will be transferred to an actual work site that is supervised and wherein the student is paid for his/her work.

Procedure: The work experience coordinator will work with area business people as a job developer working to place each autistic student after the appropriate skills have been attained in a work situation.

Materials: Any required by employers

Domain Area: Primarily area industry/business

Evaluation: Teacher/employer observation

RECREATION

Goal: Students will engage in age-appropriate individual and group sports activities.

Objective: Students will be involved in adaptive physical activities that allow growth at an individual pace.

Procedure: Teacher will work directly with students, or students will be scheduled into adaptive physical education classes where they can participate in individual/group sports that they have an interest in. These may include basketball, track events, swimming, badminton, gymnastics, etc.

Materials: Sports equipment necessary for each of the above sports.

Domain Area: School gymnasium or playground

Evaluation: Teacher observation, informal skill checklists designed by teacher, instructional objectives on the IEP.

RECREATION

Goal: Students will engage in age-appropriate leisure time activities.

Objective: Student will choose age-appropriate activities and work individually or in small groups exhibiting appropriate social behavior.

Procedure: Teacher will present a variety of activities that are age-appropriate, and the student will choose one or more in which leisure time will be spent productively. Activities will include card playing, puzzles, coloring, painting, games, etc.

Materials: Deck of cards, puzzles, games, books, crayons, paints

Domain Area: Classroom, community

Evaluation: Teacher observation, parent observation

RECREATION

Goal: Students will participate in the Special Olympics Program.

Objective: Students will be involved in Special Olympics activities.

Procedure: Teacher/Special Olympics coach will present Special Olympics activities that include:

- softball throw
- track and field
- swimming/diving
- soccer
- basketball
- cross country skiing
- Alpine skiing
- poly hockey
- bowling

Materials: Special Olympics curriculum, basketballs, soccerballs, skis, softball, etc.

Domain Area: School gym, city pool, school playground, Special Olympics sites

Evaluation: Teacher observation, individual/group competitions, and skill checklists in Special Olympics curriculums, according to the task analysis

RECREATION

Goal: Students will participate in age-appropriate playground activities in school.

Objective: Students will initiate their involvement in playground activities using appropriate social skills with handicapped and non-handicapped peers.

Procedure: When students are on the playground during the school day they will be encouraged by the teacher to become involved with activities that require decision-making skills and social integration. They will learn to use playgrcund equipment (slide, swings, jungle jim, etc.) and will become involved in games such as jumprope, kickball, tag, catch with a ball, hopscotch and hide and seek.

Materials: Playground equipment, balls, jumprope, etc.

Domain Area: School playground

Evaluation: Teacher observation of social interaction and choice of age-appropriate activities

ACADEMIC

Goal: Student will acquire functional academic skills.

OBJECTIVE 1: Student will recognize numbers and demonstrate counting skills.

Procedure: Introduce numbers in conjunction with one-to-one corresponding activities so that the idea of counting is reinforced and not simply a rote memory skill.

Materials: Objects for counting, number cards to match to object cards, tactile counting cards, sorting number box coloring worksheets, games.

Domain Area: School

Evaluation: Observe student behavior, samples of student's work

OBJECTIVE 2: Student will be able to do simple math problems and activities, e.g., add, subtract, object groupings.

Procedure: Student will be taught basic math concepts, adapting materials from grade level when necessary and progressing as indicated to either resource or mainstream classes.

Materials: Grade level math materials, books, worksheets, common objects for setting up concrete activites demonstrating addition and subtraction problems, flash cards.

Domain Area: School

Evaluation: Work samples, tests, worksheets

OBJECTIVE 3: Student will count and use money.

Procedure: Give student quantities of coins to be sorted and counted. Match amounts of coins with priced item cards. Make shopping lists and calculate money needed. Use cash register to pay for items and make change.

Materials: Coins, shopping flyers, empty containers with prices, worksheets, cash register, calculators.

Domain Area: School

Evaluation: Work samples, teacher observation, tests, worksheets

OBJECTIVE 4: Student will be able to tell time.

Procedure: Adapt regular classroom materials as necessary to teach time concepts. Make personal time lines.

Materials: Worksheets, classroom clock, clock model with moveable hands

Domain Area: School, home

Evaluation: Work samples, on-spot evaluation, e. g., "What time is it?"

OBJECTIVE 5: Student will have survival sight vocabulary.

Procedure: Provide systematic instruction of survival words encountered in daily living.

Materials: Worksheets, signs, matching word cards, pictures for matching, Sign Language Books A-D

Domain Area: School, community

Evaluation: Observe student behavior, worksheets, tests

OBJECTIVE 6: Student will acquire comprehension skills in reading.

Procedure: Adapt grade level reading materials as necessary. Language experience approach may be used for daily written assignments in a journal to be read by the student.

Materials: Grade level reading materials, journals kept by students, workbooks

Domain Area: School, home

Evaluation: Reading workbook pages and worksheets, oral exams, tests

OBJECTIVE 7: Student will write legibly.

Procedure: Adapt grade level penmanship materials as necessary.
Include fine motor activities in daily planning.

Materials: Penmanship materials

Domain Area: School

Evaluation: Student work samples

LANGUAGE/COMMUNICATION

Goal: Develop functional communication skills.

Functional language and communication skills are the major deficit areas for most autistic students. Their receptive and expressive abilities may vary greatly.

Assessment of these abilities will be done individually, and a program will be developed based on the assessment. Programs will focus on providing a functional communication system for each student, allowing the student to communicate basic wants and needs. A system may be verbal or non-verbal, or involve a total communication approach, communication boards or books.

Communication skills will be reinforced throughout activities in each curriculum area as it is an integral part of the program.

An intensive speech and language evaluation will be conducted with an individual plan for each student written and followed throughout the school work program.

BEHAVIORAL

Goal: Increase appropriate behavior.

The program adopts the premise that autism is "distinct and separate" from childhood schizophrenia. Techniques of behavior change, therefore, are not psychotherapeutic in nature, nor are parents, in any sense, encouraged by the program to view their child's disorder as a familial pathology. In the absence of evidence for a clear etiology for the "autistic syndrome" or overwhelming demonstrations of success by any doctrinaire practitioners, the PACE program views the disorder as a varying collection of behaviors in which the ability to communicate by conventional definition of the term is markedly deficient.

Behavior change, therefore, must always center around progress toward better communication. Simple elimination of undesirable behaviors cannot be an end in itself because, obviously, even undesirable actions or vocalizations are preferable to no communication.

The PACE program relies on an eclectic collection of behavior modification techniques that may vary from strict operant conditioning - shaping and modeling, charting - to a less rigid system of verbal praise (or disapproval). Variations in needs of students make this flexibility absolutely essential.

However, to make this system work, the staff-student ratio must be high (2 students to one staff member), and the direction for

each student in terms of target behaviors must be clearly understood and shared by all staff members. To do this, frequent videotapes of student behavior, frequent staff meetings, and clear and firm leadership from the teacher in charge must take place.

SEXUAL/SOCIAL

Understanding Body Parts

Goal: Student will identify the following body parts:

head	arms	chest	toes
eyes	elbows	stomach	toenails
nose	hands	thighs	bellybutton
ears	fingers	legs	rectum
mouth	thumbs	knees	penis
lips	fingernails	ankles	vagina
neck	shoulders	feet	breast
			nipples

Objective: The student will locate specified body parts (e.g., hands, chest, neck, penis) upon request.

Procedures: Teacher directs student to point to body part and describe that part:

Teacher says "This is a _____" and student describes.

Materials: "Simon Says" game

Worksheets - coloring body parts, filling in missing body parts

Domain Area: Classroom

Evaluation: Teacher observation

SEXUAL/SOCIAL

Menstruation

Goal: Female students will have an understanding of the menstrual cycle.

Objective: Students will have an understanding that:

1. Bleeding from the vagina occurs in females once a month.
2. Menstruation lasts approximately five days.
3. They should be able to chart their own menstrual cycle.

Procedure: A female instructor will explain body function, reasons for the menstrual cycle, the importance of charting one's own menstrual cycle and reinforce concepts of menstruation through teacher designed activities.

Materials: Body charts, sanitary napkins

Domain Area: Classroom

Evaluation: Teacher observation

SEXUAL/SOCIAL

Masturbation

Goal: Students will have a functional understanding of masturbation.

Objective: Students will understand that there are private and public places, and their behavior must relate to their respective places.

Procedure: Through discussions - small group and individual counseling, the teacher will explain that masturbation is very personal and explain the appropriate and inappropriate times for masturbation. Teacher asks various questions and provides information to students regarding what masturbation is. Instruction will include information regarding clean-up procedures.

Materials: Worksheets

Domain Area: Classroom, home

Evaluation: Observation of student behavior

SEXUAL/SOCIAL

Relationships with Others (Social Behavior)

Goal: Students will understand appropriate and inappropriate social behavior that includes attitude, ability to communicate, manners, nudity and respect for others.

Objective: Students will experience social situations where they must exhibit appropriate social behavior and experience positive relationships with others.

Procedure: The teacher will expose students to social situations in which they must exhibit appropriate social behavior and have positive relationships with other individuals. The teachers will emphasize the need for appropriate behavior and discuss this with students in each situation.

Materials: Charts for recording student's behavior

Domain Area: School, home and community

Evaluation: Teacher evaluation

SEXUAL/SOCIAL

Physical Examination

Goal: Student will understand the purpose of a physical examination.

Objective: Students will undergo a complete physical examination in which they will become more aware of body parts, especially their genitalia.

Procedure: Students will be given an individual physical examination by a physician or nurse practitioner, who will spend time discussing with students their body parts as related to the issue of sexuality.

Materials: Any medical instruments used for physical examinations. Male/female body charts.

Domain Area: Nurse's or doctor's office

Evaluation: Assessment by nurse practitioner and/or medical doctor

ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING (ADL)

Goal: Student will acquire functional skills in Activities of Daily Living skills (ADL)

OBJECTIVE 1: Student will eat in a socially appropriate manner.

Procedure: Instruction will be given on use of utensils, proper use of a napkin, proper use of condiments, finger foods vs. non-finger foods, appropriate time spent eating, and appropriate chewing.

Materials: Utensils, napkins, meals and condiments

Domain Area: School, home, community, e.g., restaurants, cafeterias

Evaluation: Checklists, progress charts, observation of student behavior at all meal and snack times

OBJECTIVE 2: Student will categorize foods according to meal placement, e.g., breakfast, lunch, dinner.

Procedure: Student will take varieties of food stuffs and group them together appropriately by labeling them breakfast, lunch, or dinner items.

Materials: Pictures of foods, empty food containers, actual foods prepared in cooking classes or in cafeteria

Domain Area: School, home

Evaluation: Observation

OBJECTIVE 3: Student will prepare simple meals from the 3 groups following a recipe (picture or written).

Procedure: Student will assemble necessary items to cook the meal, assemble food items needed, and cook a meal according to specified directions.

Materials: Cooking utensils, food items, recipes

Domain Area: School, home

Evaluation: Observation, finished product

OBJECTIVE 4: Student will clean kitchen after use.

Procedure: Student will clear dishes, wipe down counters and tabletops, clean appliances, sweep floor, leave work area cleaned and have items put away properly.

Materials: Kitchen area, cleaning supplies

Domain Area: School, home

Evaluation: Observe work area before and after use.

OBJECTIVE 5: Student will be able to put groceries away in proper storage areas.

Procedure: Have student differentiate between foods belonging in the refrigerator, the freezer, and cupboards. Continue by having student put foods away accordingly.

Materials: Groceries, kitchen space

Domain Area: Home, school

Evaluation: Student demonstration of putting groceries away, observation of storage areas when completed

OBJECTIVE 6: Student will make a shopping list.

Procedure: According to ability, using a picture matching checklist or writing out a list, student will check supplies and list items to be bought, including staples, favored foods, on up to complete grocery needs.

Materials: Picture checklists, empty food containers for matching to list, grocery sight-word lists

Domain Area: Kitchen area in school and home

Evaluation: Work samples, e. g., completed shopping lists

OBJECTIVE 7: Student will find wanted items in store, place in cart and proceed through the check-out area.

Procedure: Proceed through store matching items to list, checking them off when found. When all items are checked off, student will go through check-out area appropriately.

Materials: Shopping list, cart or basket, grocery store

Domain Area: Community

Evaluation: Observation of student behavior

OBJECTIVE 8: Student will choose proper clothing in relation to weather and place.

Procedure: Student will pick out clothing daily. Given an example involving weather and event, student will choose appropriate clothing from an assortment of own clothes. Additional instruction can be included daily when preparing to dress for the day, and may include lessons using pictures that students would have to identify and relate according to instructions, e.g., match picture of winter scene with picture of winter coat, mittens, etc.

Materials: Student's clothing, pictures of places, clothes, weather scenes

Domain Area: Home, school

Evaluation: Observe number of correct matches; observe student's

OBJECTIVE 9: Student will demonstrate ability to fasten, zip, button, and secure clothing.

Procedure: Using button boards, lacing and zipper boards for practice, student will repeat these actions on clothing articles first off, and then on, own body.

Materials: Button boards, lacing boards, zipper boards, dressing dolls, clothing

Domain Area: School, home

Evaluation: Observe student's demonstration of above activities

OBJECTIVE 10: Student will dress appropriately with maximum degree of independence possible.

Procedure: Students will be given instruction on putting on all types of clothing and their removal. Whenever possible, this instruction should be incorporated into daily activities that require dressing and undressing, e.g., dressing each morning, putting outdoor clothing on, go swimming, etc.

Materials: Students' wardrobes

Domain Area: Home, school

Evaluation: Progress charts, daily records and checklists

OBJECTIVE 11: Student will have independent bathroom skills.

Procedure: Individualized programs will be designed to meet each child's need. Programs will provide each child with the ability to communicate his/her need to use bathroom facilities. Responsibility for using facilities correctly will shift from instructor to student as soon as communicative ability develops, and will be structured by staff to allow for success until student reaches an independent functioning level and can be successful without built-in structures.

Materials: Comb, soap, towels, personal toilet articles

Domain Area: School, home, community

Evaluation: Daily charting, written logs

OBJECTIVE 12: Student will complete daily personal grooming activities to highest degree of independence possible.

Procedure: Opportunities for independent performance will be presented after systematic instruction of skills needed to perform personal grooming functions. These functions would include, but not be limited to: handwashing, face washing, oral hygiene, showering/bathing, hair washing, combing hair, nail care, shaving, and menstrual care.

Materials: Personal grooming kits

Domain Area: School, home

Evaluation: Daily progress charts, long-term progress records

OBJECTIVE 13: Student will demonstrate knowledge of basic personal first aid skills.

Procedure: Systematic instruction will be given on basic first aid procedures. Instruction will include the use of s mulation activities, role playing, picture sequencing, and using actual situations that occur requiring first aid attention. Basic first aid procedures would include, but not be limited to, asking for help when hurt, getting a band aid, cleaning a cut, putting on a small bandage or band aid.

Materials: Bandages, band aids, antiseptic, first-aid related picture sequence scenes

Domain Area: Home, school, community

Evaluation: Observation of student behavior: work samples, e.g., put a bandage on designated area in simulation activity.

OBJECTIVE 14: Student will identify objects in general environment that are, or could be, dangerous.

Procedure: Students will receive instruction on common objects that can cause harm or make one sick. Activities to reinforce this could include: matching objects with pictures of scene depicting accidents that the particular object could cause, picking a potentially dangerous object from a group of common objects and telling how or why it could be: sort edible items from non-edible items.

Materials: Variety of common objects: empty containers of edible and non-edible items: poison labels, sequence pictures, pictures of accident scenes.

Domain Area: School, home, community

Evaluation: Observation of student behavior, record keeping

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